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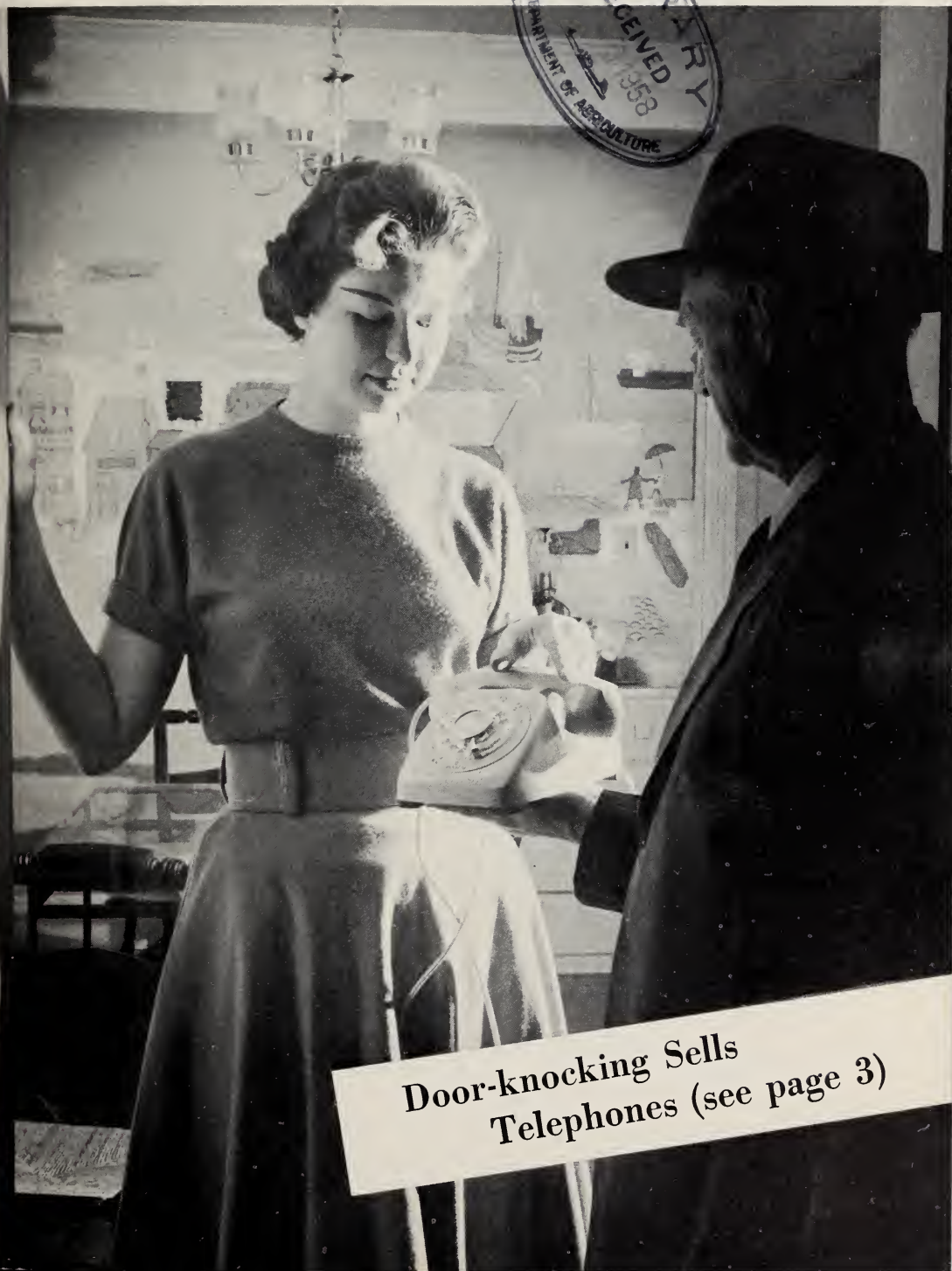
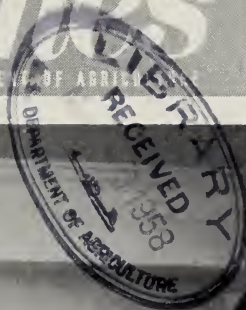
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Rural Lines

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION • U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY
1958



Door-knocking Sells
Telephones (see page 3)



A Message from the

ADMINISTRATOR

About 46 of every 100 farms in the United States lack telephone service. Another portion are without modern service. The areas without service or where the service is poor comprise serious gaps in our national communications system.

In 8 years of experience with the rural telephone program REA has learned that in most cases it is not economically feasible to start a modern telephone system in a small territory which has never seen a mile of line or where service is poor. As our telephone advisory committee suggested, it is far more practical to assist with the expansion and modernization of already existing systems.

It is REA's job to help with this task, but it cannot close the gaps alone. I interpret both the letter and spirit of the Rural Electrification Act to mean that action to extend and improve service must begin at home.

I ask those now in the rural telephone business to join REA in taking a good hard look at rural areas which are without adequate service or which have no service at all. Give careful study to current REA policies and practices. Are they what they should be? Re-examine your own operations with an eye toward filling these gaps. Is it possible for you to do more than you are doing?

If you feel that REA can do more to help, we would like to hear your suggestions. We want you to "lay them on the line." If you feel we are on the right track, of course, we would like to know that, too.

Administrator.

David C. Hamill

Rural Lines

THIS MONTH'S COVER

Modern color telephones are hard to resist, particularly when a woman sees how they complement her own home furnishings. Eunice Adkison was sold, ordered her own color phone two days later.

Editor: Hubert Kelley, Jr. This month's contributors: Louisan Mamer, Virgil Hassler, Donald Runyon, George Munger.

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A Sales Promotion Feature

Camden Campaign Places 189 Sets

Manager Bill Schmidt refuses to sit around waiting for opportunity to knock. Armed with extra phones, he and his staff knock on the doors themselves.

“Who says there are no telephone sales opportunities in strictly rural areas?” wonders William C. Schmidt,* manager of Camden Rural Telephone Co., Camden, Mich.

Bill Schmidt doesn't believe you can afford to wait for opportunity to come a-knocking, but he has proved that you can create it through planned selling.

He points to Camden's growth since cutover on May 20, 1956. At that time, the company's four ex-

changes served 785 subscribers and only 12 extensions. During the next 15 months, Camden added 139 subscribers and 50 extensions.

When you visit the Camden area, you realize that it took some doing for Schmidt to get his new business. There are no industries and suburban developments to generate a steady flow of new orders. The few business places are small, catering to the needs of the region's hog and dairy farmers.

Also, little effort was made to place extensions and other extra services before the cutover. Schmidt felt that many sales chances were lost then, and he de-

* Bill Schmidt is now manager of the Shiawassee Telephone Co., Perry, Mich., another REA borrower.



Good salesmen show color sets first, explain how they accentuate color scheme of room.

veloped a hard selling campaign to make up for lost time.

Camden's outside men are trained to sell on every call. For example, they take at least two phones into the house when installing a new service. After the main station has been installed, the man asks, "And where do you want the extension placed?"

If the lady of the house replies that she ordered only the one phone, the answer usually given is, "When I saw what a fine home you have, I thought there might be a mistake in the order. Most people today find they need at least two phones to save steps and time in answering calls." While this gambit doesn't work everytime, response has been favorable.

To start subscribers thinking about the advantages of an extension phone, Schmidt offered free installation of an extension to the first six persons calling the Camden business office after 1 p.m., May 13. The offer was made in the monthly newsletter—with this string attached: Winners had to report their reactions to the extensions after using them. The sixth call came within 15 minutes after the opening gun. The following month's newsletter listed the six early birds and their comments.

The Camden borrower was the first telephone system in Michigan to get Public Service Commission approval of a "one stop service charge" tariff provision. A new phone, outside or inside move, or extension—or any combination of these installations — costs a flat \$4.00. A color phone installation, along with any other installation jobs that can be handled on the same call, costs only \$2.00. Bill Schmidt expects this "bargain rate" to be a powerful factor in building revenue.

He also switched from a flat one-time charge for a color phone to an additional monthly charge of 25 cents per set. Schmidt feels this is a better deal for the firm in several ways. It helps increase monthly revenue, and the customer finds the smaller charge somewhat easier to digest than the lump sum charge of \$10.50. Furthermore, subscribers are less apt to feel that they actually own the telephone under the new plan.

Schmidt supports direct selling efforts with a steady flow of news releases to local newspapers and a whole series of self-made posters in the business office. He also is active in his local Commercial Club and sparkplugs its campaigns to bring more industry to the area.

Objective on every new installation job should be a phone in every major area of the house — kitchen and bedroom as well as living area.



A Five-Point Telephone Sales Technique

1. The Approach. A proper greeting when a new subscriber answers the door is, "Good morning, Mrs. Jones. I am John Doe, with the Rural Telephone Company. I am here to install your service." With these words, your employee has established the fact that he is in the business of providing service, not telephones.

2. The Appraisal. Upon entering the house, the employee should say, "I would like to talk with you for a few minutes about the kind of service your family needs." Through observation and polite questions, he should determine as quickly as possible the arrangement of the house, color schemes, the number of people in the family, and their ages. He should then return to his truck and bring in appropriate color sets.

3. The Recommendation. The employee should recommend one telephone in each of the major areas of the house—living, working, and sleeping. He should point out the best location for each set, and offer one advantage for placing a set there. Then he should show the subscriber two color sets for each location, asking her which

color she wants. Every objection should be answered politely with more advantages. Finally, the employee should quote the package price, stressing the fact that the subscriber can make substantial savings by making her decision now.

4. The Closing. As every salesman knows, you have to ask for the sale. Put it to the subscriber this way. "May I install this complete service for you today?" Whatever she answers, it is important to express appreciation.

5. Backing Them Up. It is the manager's job to train his employees in proper sales techniques and to offer them continuous encouragement. Some have good results with incentive contests, but a pat on the back or guidance at the right time is just as important. Posters and equipment displays in the business office can help explain package deals to subscribers, as can periodic advertisements in local papers. Order takers in the office can obtain information from subscribers in advance to help the installer make a sound recommendation.

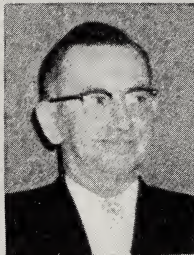
Meet



"It's time to give thought to developing a safety program..."—Dean Searls, Manager, Adams Telephone Cooperative, Camp Point, Ill.

"Include a business administration course in REA seminars..."

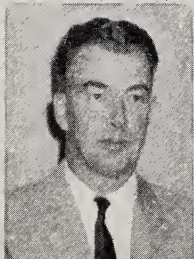
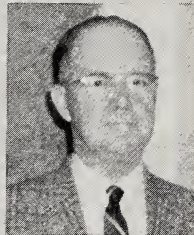
— Kenneth A. Knudsen, Manager, Dakota Cooperative Telephone Company, Inc., Irene, S. Dak.



"Progress in rural telephony is due to industry efforts as a whole..."—Herbert H. Welsh, President, Northern Kansas Telephone Company, Nortonville, Kans.

"More technical training is needed for borrowers..."

— Joe Roberts, President, Inter-County Telephone Company, Gallatin, Mo.



"Streamline program from the engineering standpoint..."—Harold L. Ericson, President, Minnesota Central Telephone Company, Hector, Minn.

REA's Telephone Advisory Committee, which met in Washington, D. C., on Dec. 3 and 4, has submitted a number of recommendations to Administrator David A. Hamil "in the interest of promoting continued progress" in rural telephony. The recommendations conform to the following:

1. *Consolidation of Small Properties.* That REA encourage the establishment of telephone operating units of economically practicable size to reduce problems of management and improve the effective use of technical personnel.

2. *Refinancing Policy.* That REA continue its present policy with respect to refinancing and making of loans on the security of a first mortgage.

3. *Development of New Equipment and Methods.* That REA continue its participation in the development of new equipment and methods that might reduce the cost of providing service in rural areas.

4. *Technical Seminars.* That REA continue to hold technical seminars for borrowers' engineers and other personnel, and that efforts be continued to interest institutions of higher learning in adding courses on telephony to their curricula. The Committee also urged borrowers to participate in industry-sponsored short courses offered by some universities.

Telephone Advisory Committee

5. *Use of Manuals.* That REA encourage and assist telephone borrowers in making more effective use of the valuable information available in manuals prepared and distributed by REA.

6. *Compulsory Competitive Bidding.* That REA reconsider its policy generally requiring competitive bidding on the purchase of central office equipment.

7. *Mortgage Ratio Requirements.* That REA review various mortgage ratio requirements that will be affected by an FCC revision in station accounting procedures.

Summarize Opinions

Therecommendationssummarize opinions expressed by the 17-member advisory group on a wide range of topics touching on all phases of rural telephony. They were prepared by Chairman Daniel B. Corman in conjunction with a reporting committee consisting of Richard D. Crowe, Harold L. Ericson, Fred R. Harris, Edward D. Hildreth, and Herbert H. Welsh.

REA Administrator David A. Hamil, members of his staff, and Kenneth L. Scott, Director of Agricultural Credit Services, USDA, participated in the discussions.

The committee recognized progress in rural telephony since enactment of the telephone amendment to the Rural Electrification Act in 1949. About 54 percent of the



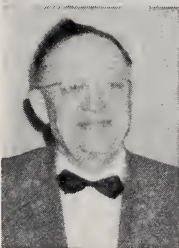
"Big problem still exists in serving sparsely settled areas . . ."—Donald H. Brooks, Manager, West River Mutual Aid Corporation, Hazen, N. Dak.

"Office accounting is important in entire operation . . ."—Edward D. Hildreth, Manager, DeKalb Telephone Cooperative, Alexandria, Tenn.



"Financing is a continuing proposition. Think to the future . . ."—S. A. Lane, President, Western Arkansas Telephone Company, Russelville, Ark.

"Work toward rural plant capable of furnishing urban type service . . ."—Orla L. Moody, Staff Engineer, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, New York, N. Y.



"Efficiency of service is extremely important in rural telephony . . ."—Daniel B. Corman, General Manager, South Central Rural Telephone Cooperative, Glasgow, Ky.

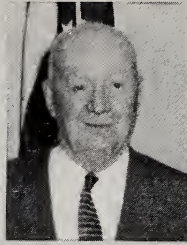


"Primary objective is better service to more people . . ." — William C. Henry, President, Northern Ohio Telephone Company, Bellevue, Ohio.



"Encourage more direct borrower participation in working out contracts . . ."—Roy C. Boecher, Manager, Pioneer Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Kingfisher, Okla.

"Continue efforts in development of new equipment and methods . . ." —Fred R. Harris, President, Southern Telephone Company, Jackson, Mich.



"Increase in program has been beyond expectations . . ."—John Birchmore, President, Comer Telephone Company, Comer, Ga.



farms in this country now have telephones, compared to slightly more than 32 percent in 1950. The more than \$426 million in loans approved by REA since the start of its telephone program will make it possible to provide 929,000 farm and other rural subscribers with new or improved service.

However, the committee observed that this progress, coupled with a demand for more service, has created technical and management problems of a more complex nature. To meet present and future service requirements in rural areas calls for streamlined, efficiently operated systems capable of expansion. Thinking, planning, and acting with the future in mind were the principal points stressed by committee members.

As one member of the committee put it, "A lot has been accomplished during the past 8 years, but a great deal more remains to be done." The others agreed.



"Tough areas and biggest problems lie ahead . . ."—Riggs Shepperd, Manager, Southwest Texas Telephone Co-op, Inc., Hondo, Tex.

"Some companies have difficulty in qualifying for loans because of size . . ."—Richard D. Crowe, Manager, Dos Palos Telephone Company, Dos Palos, Calif.



"Rural America is growing. We must grow with it . . ."—Harold C. Ebaugh, Manager, Triangle Telephone Association, Inc., Havre, Mont.

REA Telephone Borrowers Now Serve 620,000

An estimated 620,000 subscribers were receiving service from REA telephone borrowers as calendar 1958 began. Of this number, some 434,000 were receiving modern dial service.

Since its program began in 1949, REA estimates that about 180,000 subscribers on borrowers' lines have obtained telephone service for the first time and 390,000 subscribers got their first dial phones.

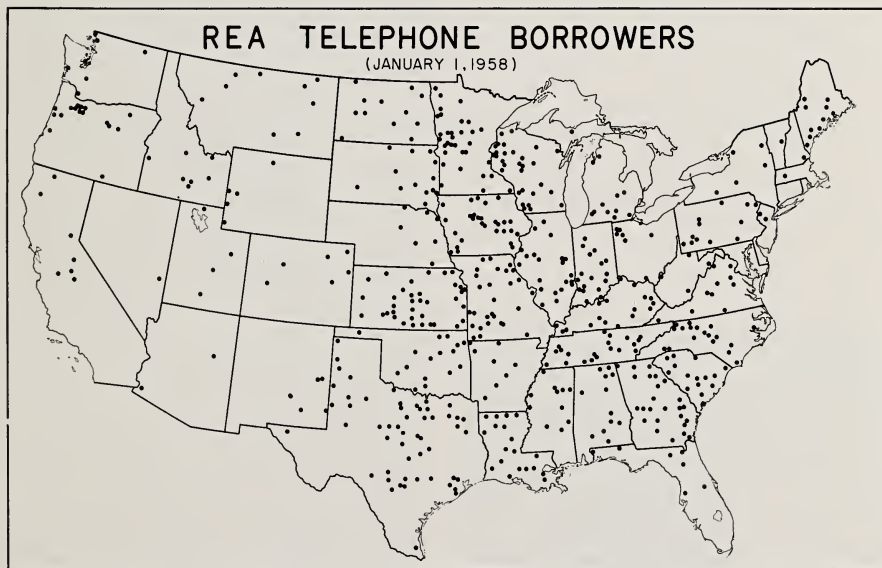
The map below shows headquarters locations of REA's 576 telephone borrowers, including 371 independent companies and 205 cooperative associations. REA has approved loans for these borrowers totaling \$426 million — money which will ultimately finance new and improved service to about 929,000 subscribers over 258,590 miles of rural lines.

For both REA and its borrowers, 1957 was a year of action. REA

approved over \$76.4 million in telephone loans for 148 independent companies and 53 cooperatives, including 74 new borrowers. The year's loans will finance dial service for 148,474 new and current subscribers and the construction of 38,000 miles of pole line.

During 1957, borrowers brought dial service to an estimated 120,000 additional rural subscribers. As the year ended, a total of 1,430 new dial exchanges financed by REA loans had been cut over by 392 companies and co-ops. More than one-fourth of these—388 exchanges—were placed in operation in 1957.

As of Jan. 1, 1958, borrowers had repaid \$5.7 million of principal and \$4.3 million in interest on their REA loans. Advance payments totaled \$515,000, and borrowers achieved a substantial reduction in the amount of delinquent loan payments.



REA Studies New Plant and Equipment Developments

A number of new developments in telephone plant and equipment are currently under consideration by REA. They include—

- *Transistorized subscriber carrier equipment.* A field trial has been underway on a borrower's system in Virginia since July, and performance has been excellent so far. The use of transistors with 10 to 20 years life and with low power drain will sharply reduce the annual costs of this type of equipment.

- *Insulated open wire construction.* Field trials have been underway for several years to evaluate the use of construction using individually insulated conductors installed with insulated fittings with about 4-inch separation. Insulation eliminates corrosion, mid-span hits, leakage problems created by salt spray or fog, and the effects of foliage. More extensive field trials will be necessary.

- *Color coding of plastic insulated plastic cable.* Specifications

will soon be issued for full color coding of plastic cables up to 400 pair. Color coding will permit splicing and terminal installation without the need of testing. The color code being considered will be an industry standard.

- *Dial mobile radio equipment.* Two types are in operation on borrowers' systems in Virginia and Florida, and others are being licensed. Four manufacturers have equipment under trial, and prospects are that this type of equipment will be in regular use early this year.

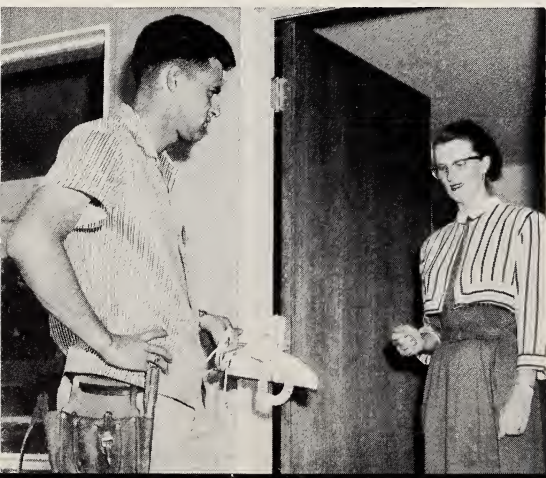
- *Buried plant.* REA has designed a buried wire for single circuit application which costs less than \$50 per 1000 feet, as well as a cable for direct burial.

- *Splicing Connectors for Plastic Cable.* A new connector to splice plastic insulated conductors is under field test by REA. The joint is comparable to a soldered joint, and is insulated and waterproof.

Western Borrower Publicizes Milestone Phone

An alert publicity sense paid off for G. J. Stover, president of

Skagit Valley Telephone Co., Mount Vernon, Wash., with this picture, a story, and an editorial in the same issue of his local paper. The photo shows employee Jerry Bradford arriving at the home of Mrs. James G. Thurston with the company's 7500th phone, a color set. On the same day it passed this milestone last fall, Skagit Valley converted the last of its 11 exchanges to dial. Stover makes sure his paper gets photos by hiring his own photographer to record newsworthy events.



Rural Lines

Twin Harbors Beaches Telephone Directory

WESTPORT - GRAYLAND - NORTH COVE - TOKELAND



All advertisers in index have a display ad on this or following pages

AFRICAN QUEEN
FOOT DRIFT CHARTER BOAT
LICENSED CREW
HOWARD REDDING
Westport Andrew 8-3966

ANCHOR CHARTERS
Charter Boats
LICENSED SKIPPER
THE BEST IN BAIT
Rentals - Sales
Custom Canning
CLAMS AND SALMON
Westport Andrew 8-3100

BJARNE NILSEN CHARTERS
SPORT FISHING BOATS
Expedition
REN
Westport Al

DEEP S FISHING
DUC
HUP

WELCOME TO THE BEACH

"BILL" CHANNELL CHARTER
In index have a display ad on this or following pages

Motel
N VIEW
— Clean, Equipped
— Refrigerator
— Bathrooms
— Towels
— Linens
— Freeport
— 3340

Chinook Motel and Cabins
Electric Heat and Cooking
New, Modern Units
Andrew 8-3723

COATES SUNSET COURT
OCEAN VIEW
GAS AND ELECTRIC RANGES
Refrigerator
Beauty
Near Be
WELL KEPT
Grayland

VIEW MOTEL
ALL ELECTRIC UNITS
HARDY FLOOR HEAT
KING SIZE BEDS
SITE COOKING FACILITIES
One of Westport's
Finest Motels
— AND BATH ROOMS
— Andrew 8-4488

Sands Motel
ENTRANCE TO WESTPORT
IN LOVELY UNITS
BEAUTY-REST MATTRESSES
COMPLETE KITCHENS
Host and Hostess — Howard and Cherie Bryant
For Reservations Call
WESTPORT
Andrew 8-3751

AIN'T LIFE GRAND



SURF SWIMMING

PORT SALMON FISHING



Directory Boosts Resort Area

"A mile wide and 26 miles long," is the way Henry Mumaw describes his Cohasset Beach Telephone Co., at Westport, Wash. But while his system is long and skinny, his telephone directory is fat and sleek.

Mumaw's pole line runs north and south along a highway serving a narrow Pacific Coast peninsula. On one side is the broad ocean beach; on the other are protected inlets. These features add up to an ideal vacation locale with boating, swimming, and unexcelled salmon fishing. Year-round businesses include commercial fisheries, canning plants, and cranberry marshes.

Since he serves a resort area where many vacationers are unfamiliar with local business names, Mumaw realized that the classified section of his telephone directory would be of special value to summer subscribers. But he decided to go one step farther, and turn the yellow pages into an attractive promotion brochure to boost the vacation possibilities of the peninsula.

The result is an exceptionally attractive publication, printed on a good grade of paper with a plastic-coated cover. The slick pages show to advantage nearly two dozen publicity photographs of area activities, including digging for razor clams, salmon fishing, sun bathing, and sailing. Two pages of printed matter tell where to go and what to see. Mumaw even includes a table of tides.

The idea for a promotional directory proved popular with local

businessmen. Mumaw's classified section is almost twice the size of his regular subscriber listings. What began as an area promotion effort and as an aid to summer visitors turned out to be a money-maker for the telephone company.

The resort area offers other sources of revenue. "During the summer," Mumaw declares, "we use 10 toll lines out of Westport to Aberdeen. In addition, there are six toll lines out of our Grayland exchange. Twice that number would not be enough to carry the summer load of toll calls. Sometimes calls back up, particularly from 5 to 10 p.m., when fishermen bring in their boats."

Toll revenues drop during the stormy months of January and February. Even so, they are about double what they were at cutover of the new dial system in May 1955. Revenue from local calls also has doubled since cutover.

Mumaw's system presently has 632 main stations. He expects to

have 800 installed in and around his two exchange centers by 1960.

"This business started, with just two telephones 52 years ago," relates Mumaw. "In 1946, when my father installed the first dial service here, there still were only about 135 subscribers."

The unusual shape of the Cohasset Beach service area makes it possible for Mumaw to maintain an easy-to-use facsimile record of his outside plant. It resembles one of those page-by-page route maps furnished by auto clubs. Included on drawings are pole numbers and distance between poles, date and type of construction, service drops, and other line record information. His perpetual inventory shows unit costs. He prefers a ledger system of accounts to the use of stubs, and microfilm gives him ready access to billing records.

"I find this is the simplest system for a business up to 1,000 stations," he concludes.

"Cradle to Grave" Accounting Procedures Published

New accounting procedures sent to REA telephone borrowers eliminate detailed material reporting by plant installation forces. The changes dispense with the need for plant retirement accounting for outward movement of reusable station apparatus. They also eliminate plant addition accounting for inward movement of reused station apparatus. They conform to the revised FCC "cradle to grave" procedures, and are based on average unit costs of station connection units.

The procedures are outlined in "Station Accounting—Class A and

B Companies," Section 1865.1 of REA's Telephone Operations Manual, which was distributed to borrowers last December. The FCC order pertaining to the change became effective Jan. 1, 1958. Section 1865.1 deals with (1) general points, (2) establishing the new procedure, (3) plant reporting and verification, and (4) recording transactions.

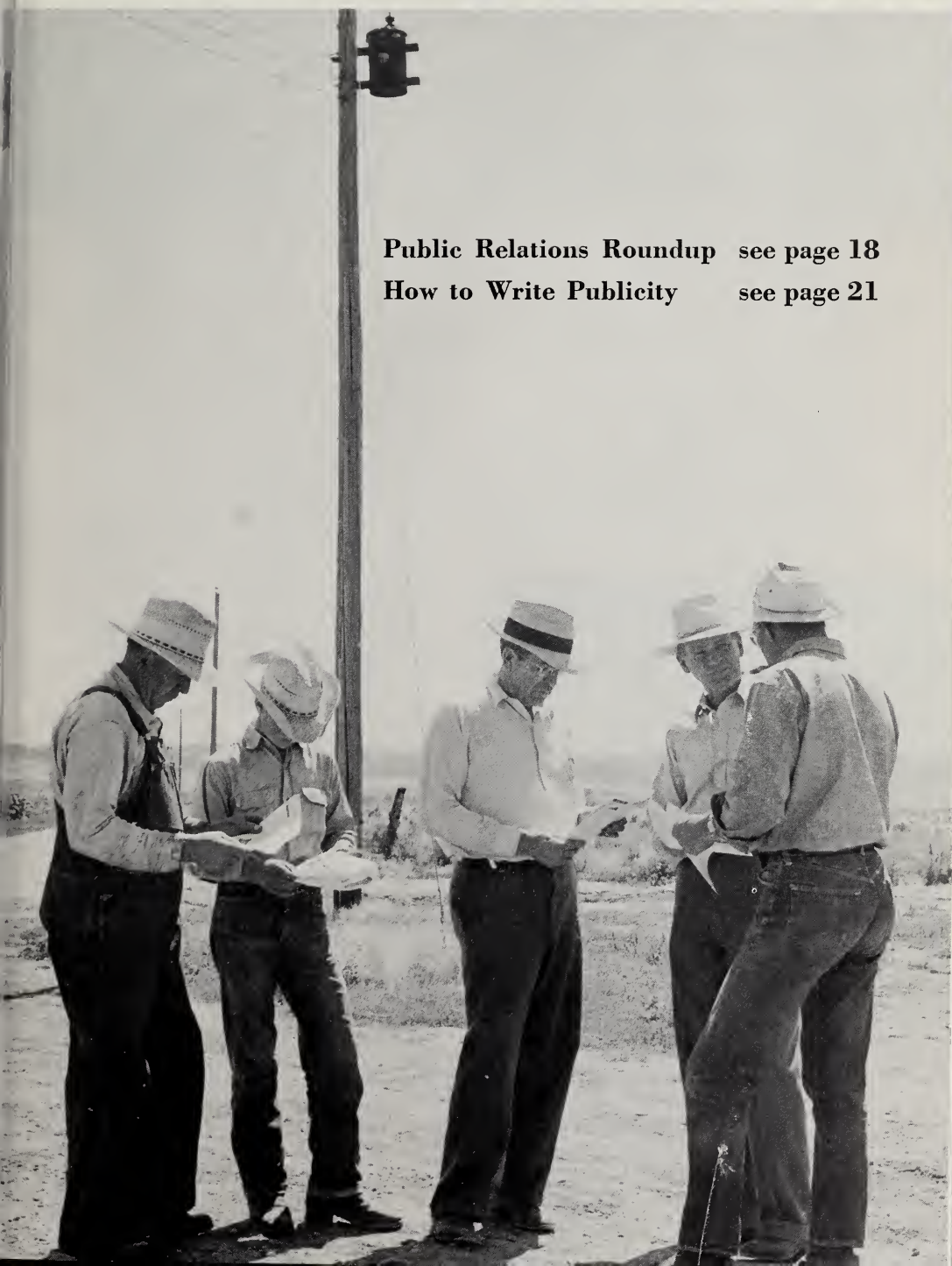


Rural Lines

R&A

Public Relations Roundup see page 18

How to Write Publicity see page 21



An "Operation Bootstrap" Story

New Life in Alabama's Hill Country

Rural development takes many forms. Sometimes it means more rural industry. Sometimes it means better roads, schools, or hospitals. In Cullman County in northern Alabama, it has meant a new kind of electrified farming.

Cullman Electric Cooperative serves an area the natives call "hill country." There are few big farms on the Co-op's lines, and even fewer industrial users. Ninety-three percent of Cullman's 10,500 consumers are farmers, and their holdings average only about 50 acres. Yet in the past 6 years alone, Co-op members have jumped their use of electricity 172 percent,

and many have switched successfully from traditional crops of cotton and corn to a thriving new poultry-and-egg business.

The amazing story of growth of the Cullman area wasn't written overnight. It had slow beginnings. Starting service in 1936, the Co-op had 300 miles of line serving 1,600 members by 1939. Average residential use at that time was just 29 kwh a month—or 348 kwh a year.

By 1951—13 years later—the system had grown to include 1,661 miles of line and more than 9,000 members. But power use growth wasn't so dramatic. The average residential consumer was using only about 1,653 kwh a year.

The Co-op's Board of Directors and Manager Claude Wood decided that the first part of their job was over. With the area coverage objective reached, they agreed that their next job was to show members how to use electricity profitably. To head the new power use program, they hired young W. Dwight Webb, a soft-spoken vocational agriculture teacher with a degree from Alabama Polytechnic Institute.

Webb, who had grown up on an Alabama farm himself, knew that farmers do not change their ways

Push-button automation helps him raise 110,000 broilers yearly while he works at a full-time town job, J. T. Wigley, left, tells Adviser Dwight Webb.



Rural Lines



B. L. England uses electric auger to raise feed when filling bins in his two 7,000-broiler houses. England broods chickens electrically with seven 2,000-watt electric brooders in each house. Average cost is 1/3 cents per chick for winter brooding.

of doing things overnight. He set out for the long haul, utilizing demonstrations, appliance campaigns, educational meetings, and individual calls to show members how to make fuller use of electricity.

During the 6 years he has worked for the Co-op, Webb has worked with no less than 30,000 men, women, and children in hundreds of meetings. He has conducted demonstrations before 4-H clubs, Future Farmers, home economics classes, veteran on-farm training sessions, and home demonstration clubs. Webb can't count the personal calls he has made on farmers to discuss particular problems, but he knows that he has recommended installation of more than 800 electric brooders within the last 18 months alone.

In addition, the Co-op has conducted 2 or 3 electric appliance campaigns a year in cooperation with local electric appliance dealers and the town system. This program has put hundreds of electric ranges, water heaters, washers and dryers, pumps and other appliances in members' homes.

The double-barreled program began to lift kwh consumption almost at once. A year after Webb was employed—in 1952—average residential use had jumped nearly 400 kwh over the year before to a new high of 2,006. Last year, it soared to 4,502 kwh per residential consumer per year!

Entered Poultry Business

Poultry accounts for part of the growth story. This mushrooming business accounts for all or part of the income of 1,200 of the Co-op's members. In 1956, poultry income in Cullman County alone reached \$12 million and equalled the combined income from cotton, dairying, and hog production. Last year, it was expected to hit \$15 million.

Alabama now leads the Nation in the growth of poultry production, and Cullman County leads all other counties in the State in production of broilers. According to *Poultry Tribune*, it runs neighboring Blount County a close second in egg production.

The nature of the poultry busi-



Troy Garden completes one of four electric sweet potato hot beds, 20 by 60 feet each, which he and his two children are building. He plants 20 acres of sweet potatoes each year from slips grown in beds, sells potatoes throughout South.

ness has helped power use to snowball. First modern poultry raisers use electricity for brooders, for egg cooling, candling and grading, for automatic feeders and waterers, and other equipment.

Since electricity helps farmers to make more money, they are able to buy more appliances for their homes. For example, two brothers in Cullman County made an additional \$1,000 with 300 fewer hens the first year they installed electric egg cooling equipment. Prices paid by local hatcheries for eggs are based on 75 percent hatchability. After switching to electric cooling, eggs produced on the brothers' farm averaged 85 percent hatchability.

More Farm on Side

Higher income isn't the only change to come with the poultry business. Cullman County Agent Grady Pinkston points out that "with farming so much easier, there has been a decrease in full-time farmers." Many men, he explains, work in industry at least

part of the time and operate poultry farms on the side. Herbert Nichelfelder, for instance, puts in 40 hours a week at an aircraft factory in Birmingham, while looking after 20,000 broilers at home.

It is true that some new industries are beginning to move into Cullman, but the poultry has helped attract them. The Co-op now serves one hatchery, and four others are located in the town. One plant makes fans and parts for laying cages and there are several feed distributing companies. A \$500,000 broiler processing plant has just been finished. One feed processing plant is already in operation and another is going up. Local officials and the Cullman Municipal Utilities Board, aware of the close relationship between rural and urban prosperity, have worked together to bring these outlets for farm produce to their town.

There are other new sources of farm income in the service area. The Cullman Co-op now serves

around 1,000 dairies—50 of them Grade A and the rest Grade B. Without electricity for milking, cooling, and feeding, it would be impossible for farmers to operate profitably.

Sweet potatoes and sweet potato plants are another new cash crop. Co-op member Wallace Hathcock has 18 electrically heated hotbeds, producing around 400,000 plants each. Hathcock ships plants all over the country. He also produces sweet potatoes for market curing, washing, and waxing them with electric equipment.

Break Came Slowly

The break with the row crop economy in Cullman County did not come all at once, and Cullman Electric Cooperative does not claim all the credit for what has happened. Co-op staffers point out that one factor has been the building of better roads for quick movement of people and goods. Another is the ready market for new products in the town of Cullman. But in the matter of introducing modern farming methods, the Co-op can justifiably claim a major role. And it can point to the great surge that began with the arrival of Dwight Webb on the scene.

Farmer Elbert Cobb, for example, is well aware of the role electricity has played in permitting him to diversify his crops. Operating a 198-acre farm on which he raises laying chickens, beef cattle, grains, and hay, Cobb said, "Without electricity, I'd be out of business."

The farm homes have changed, too. In the cotton-and-corn days in 1934, Carl Carmer told in his *Stars Fell on Alabama* how the houses in the northern part of the State were



Before automation, Wigley needed this helper to fill feeder run by time-clock. Electric auger eliminated this work.

unpainted and weathered by red dust. Today he wouldn't recognize his "hill country." New brick and painted frame homes with well-tended lawns have replaced Carmer's weatherbeaten houses.

To some, the farm revolution in Cullman County seems nothing short of a miracle. A. E. Brock, one of the Co-op's first members who now operates a 16,000-broiler poultry farm, says, "I have seen this area grow up within the last few years. Electricity has made life so much more worth living."

Webb teaches homemaking students at Holly Pond High School one-week course of study, "Electricity in the Home and on the Farm."





PUBLIC



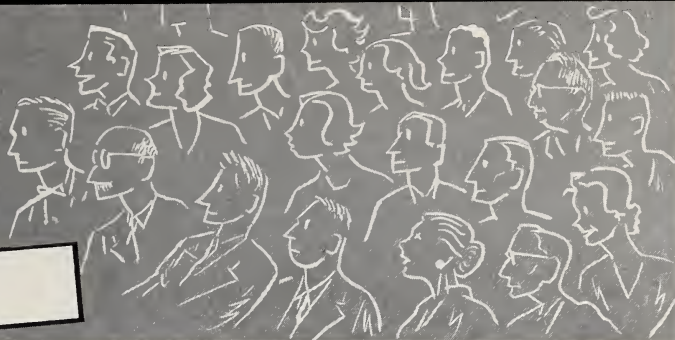
RELATIONS



WELL-ROUNDED—All employees of Yellowstone Electric Cooperative, Huntley, Mont., have cooperated in conducting a continuous, many-faceted public relations program since 1951 when they launched an electric farming campaign under the leadership of Manager Max Matthews (center, inside cover photo). Success of the program with members depends on good service, competitive rates, capital credit refunds, a rate reduction, helpful office contacts, monthly personal calls by metermen, and success stories in *Electrical Hi-Lites*. In personal visits to farm families in the sparsely settled ranch country, Matthews, power use workers, and metermen distribute power use bulletins, offer advice, and solve equipment service problems. The Co-op also conducts a program for young people, culminating in an annual Youth Fair.

COMMEMORATION—At Oklahoma's Semi-Centennial celebration, thousands of visitors from all over the State viewed Oklahoma Statewide Electric Cooperative's exhibit on the history and progress of rural electrification in Oklahoma. Manned by 50 people from 26 co-ops and OSEC, the exhibit told the story of the benefits flowing from the 20-year-old Oklahoma rural electrification program. OSEC displays included turn-table models of "before" and "after" rural homes, pointed out the \$500 million increase in business for Oklahoma merchants and 1,000 families given local employment, and showed co-ops' efforts to teach electrical safety. Upholding its tradition of serving all the people, OSEC provided ice water from two electric fountains and passed out handouts on co-op facts along with souvenirs for children and adults.

COLLEGE GRANT—East River Electric Power Cooperative, Madison, S. Dak., donated a \$72,000 AC network analyzer to South Dakota State College, Brookings, for use by its engineering department and the 21-member co-ops of the East River group. East River's grant is the largest grant of its kind ever made to the college, according to *South Dakota High-Liner*. Faculty members will operate the analyzer, carry on research with it, and train students in its operation and use in solving complex design and operation problems of power supply. The East River Room in the new engineering building, which houses the analyzer, will display a 7- by 18-foot mural depicting improvements on the farm and in the home made possible by rural electrification.



EXCHANGE



PUBLISHERS AND BANKERS — Three months ahead of its annual meeting, FEM Electric Assoc., Ipswich, S. Dak., played host to publishers and bank personnel and their wives from its 3-county area. Program after dinner covered FEM's organization, its financial arrangements and progress, future plans for the co-op, agricultural trends in the area, and the need for rural development. FEM President A. C. Haufler, who is also a leader in State and national rural electric co-op affairs, told the group of a successful rural development program in North Dakota and expressed hope that a similar project might be started in the FEM area. The meeting closed with informal discussion among the 50 guests.

PUBLIC MEETING PLACE — An average of 25 meetings held each month in the Y-W demonstration room helps keep a Colorado co-op in the public mind. To control the demand for the room and avoid misunderstandings, the board of Directors adopted and publicized rules and regulations governing the use of the room. It is located in the headquarters building of the Y-W Electric Assoc., Akron, Colo. Primary purpose of room is for display, demonstration, and actual use of electric equipment for members' benefit. Secondary purpose is to help fulfill a need for additional public meeting places.

STREET LIGHTING—Recent issues of *Watts High Lights* have carried stories on efforts of Jackson County REMC, Brownston, Ind., to provide automatic street lighting in rural villages served by co-op lines. Co-op staffers encouraged village leaders to raise a Street Lighting Fund, also assist in locating and installing street lights.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS—With colored slides made by co-ops and narration by Statewide Executive Manager William Crisp, North Carolina rural electric co-ops showed their public officials tangible benefits of rural electrification. Presentation covered benefits to farm families, churches, schools, local industry, small towns, electrical manufacturers and sales organizations, and community institutions in rural areas. The co-ops' 1957 annual dinner at which the slide presentation and other talks were given drew over 200 co-op leaders and nearly all of the officials who were invited.

(Continued on next page.)

CHRISTMAS "PRESENTS"—Beauregard Electric Cooperative, DeRidder, La., mailed \$65,000 in checks for 1943-47 earned net margins in time for members to use the money for 1957 Christmas shopping. Also as a "surprise Christmas present," Greene County REC, Jefferson, Iowa, mailed checks totaling more than \$127,000 to 3,000 members for 1941-45 deferred patronage capital credits.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL — A co-op owned power spade to dig a trench for underground wire is available for rent to members of O'Brien County REC, Primghar, Iowa. Linemen instruct members in spade's use. Co-op also offers wooden wire reels free to members who will haul them away. Reels make useful outdoor picnic tables. Other co-ops sell reels, used poles, other items, or rent equipment such as septic tank forms, floor sanders and polishers as a service to members.

Advisory Committee Asks Guidance on Reserves



Recommendations resulting from the December 5 - 6 meeting of REA's Electric Advisory Committee in Washington, D. C., include the following: (1) That REA provide borrowers with additional guidance in determining the amount of reserves they should have to meet their needs; (2) that REA and borrowers give increased attention to matters concerning service reliability of rural systems; and (3) that REA's business security program be extended to as many borrowers as possible. They are being submitted to REA Administrator David A. Hamil subject to approval by Committee members.

Shown at the meeting are (left to right): Advisers Fred Yarrow, Clay Center, Kans.; Floyd Jones, Trenton, Tenn.; John E. Buck, Corning, Mo.; Roscoe F. Keiffer, Helena, Okla.; Harry L. Oswald, chairman, North Little Rock, Ark.; W. G. Newton, Lubbock, Tex.; Kenneth L. Scott, director of Agricultural Credit Services, USDA; REA Administrator Hamil; Assistant REA Administrator Roy G. Zook; Advisers Gwyn Price, Raleigh, N. Car.; Harry H. Nuttle, Denton, Md.; Edgar H. Collison, Ritzville, Wash.; Charles M. Stewart, Bowling Green, Ky.; J. Harold Cash, Kaycee, Wyo.; John P. Madgett, LaCrosse, Wis.; and D. M. Pollock, Monroe, Ga.

School for Publicists

There is nothing mysterious about writing a good co-op publicity release. There are some important "do's" and "don'ts," however, that can spell the difference between getting a half-column story in your local paper or losing it in the editor's wastebasket.

Recently, the tricks of the publicity trade were revealed to members of the Central Georgia Electric Membership Corp., Jackson, in one-day seminars held in each of the Co-op's six power use districts. Invited to the session in their area were women volunteers who serve as Co-op publicity chairmen and as reporters at power use and home demonstration club meetings. Other guests, including amateur church, civic, and PTA reporters, brought total attendance at each seminar to about 18.

Aims of the publicity schools, according to Mrs. Elizabeth Watkins, Co-op educational director, were "first, to further a strong power use educational program; second, to promote good public relations with the Extension Service and newspapers; and, third, to train leaders to interpret the objectives of the Co-op to the public in an accurate and interesting manner."

Mrs. Watkins has relied heavily on the assistance of women consumers since she took over her job in 1948.

"With 12 counties as my field," she recalls, "I felt that the job was too big for one person, but that with member participation and a systematic educational program, it could be done."

To bring members into the act, Manager R. F. Armstrong and Mrs. Watkins formed a Co-op Power Use Committee 9 years ago to concentrate on power use activities of interest to farm wives and daughters. Recently, the committee organized a group of 6 publicity chairmen and about 40 community reporters to help with the Co-op's public relations program.

To instruct these women at the six sessions, Mrs. Watkins' was fortunate to have Mrs. George S. Birch, Co-op publicity chairman. Mrs. Birch, a former English teacher who supervised her high school newspaper, has recently completed courses in public relations and publicity.

Besides Mrs. Birch, seven local county home demonstration agents newspaper editors and several participated in the seminars. Each editor welcomed the chance to explain his paper's special requirements, such as deadlines and preferred methods of copy preparation.

"No organization or corporation is stronger than the people who represent it," Doyle Jones, Jr., editor of *The Jackson Progress-Argus*, told the Georgia women. "You are the link between your organization and the public."

"News is the most perishable commodity in the world," warned George Landry, state news editor of *The Macon Telegraph and News*. Landry cited the increasing importance of "this new type of reporter, the publicity chairman," and he told how both daily and



At publicity seminar in McDonough, Ga., the ladies wrote publicity releases on the lectures they had just heard.

weekly newspapers must depend on them to report accurate, timely news of their organization's activities.

Home agents spoke on the part electricity plays in rural homes and stressed the need for joint enterprises to spread the news.

In her lectures, Mrs. Birch told students to try to develop a news sense.

"When you do something new, different, or better, it's news in the making," she said. "You must *do* something to have something to report. Your job is as big as you make it."

She elaborated on her four commandments of good publicity (or news) writing, which are—be informed, be accurate, be brief, and be prompt. It is the volunteer's job, she emphasized, to keep posted on Co-op objectives, policies, current projects, rates, duties of employees, and all other phases of co-op operations.

The best way to write an accurate release, she insisted, is to take complete notes. As a "laboratory" test, students at the seminars were required to take notes during the morning and early afternoon lec-

tures. Then, as a "final exam," the ladies sharpened their pencils, took a good look at their notes, and prepared publicity releases on the lectures. The groups discussed the good and bad points of each story.

Proof of the value of the publicity sessions came quickly. During the two fall months in which the schools were held, the Co-op obtained 200 inches of free publicity in local papers. Mrs. Reba Bond, Co-op secretary, attended every seminar. As a result, she is able to relieve Mrs. Birch of much routine publicity work. County newspaper editors have told Mrs. Watkins that they observe genuine improvement in releases and stories filed by Co-op and other rural community club reporters.

"I rarely have to touch one with my pencil anymore," commented one.

Perhaps the best proof of the value of the sessions is the effect of the publicity stories on the readers. One Co-op member, upon reading a local story on the first semi-



Bobby Linch, editor, *The Henry County Weekly-Advertiser*, told Georgia volunteer reporters how to write news.

nar held 35 miles from her home, called Mrs. Birch and volunteered as a reporter. She was promptly enrolled in the school held in her own county, and the Power Use Committee has another capable community leader. Many have asked that the seminars be repeated next year.

Early in May, all students who attended the seminars will assemble in the Co-op building for a day-long public relations rally. Public

officials and educators will speak on the value of making friends with the public, and every newspaper editor in the area has been invited to appear on a publicity panel during the afternoon.

"All the women are so enthusiastic and trying so hard," reports Mrs. Watkins, "that we know we will have a publicity program that is just as strong as our power use program."

What Editors Want in Publicity Releases

Mrs. George S. Birch, instructor at Central Georgia EMC's six publicity-public relations seminars, offers these tips for writing the kind of co-op releases and stories that make newspapermen cheer.

- Tell the most important fact or facts first, in a straightforward manner. A good lead should awaken interest and make a reader want to continue.

- Tell *who, what, when, where, how*, and sometimes *why* early in the story.

- Write short two or three sentence paragraphs, arranged in order of descending importance. The editor may chop the tail off the story to make it fit.

- Double-check spelling of names and places.

- When mentioning a person for the first time in a story, use full name or first two initials and last name, address (Mrs. Henry F. Grady, Utopia). When referring to that person again, she is Mrs. Grady.

- Always refer to a woman as either "Miss" or "Mrs."; give a man's full name, dropping "Mr.";

use a man's title, however, if he has one.

- Use direct quotes only for important remarks.

- Write simply, avoiding exaggeration, superlatives. Do not draw conclusions or editorialize. This luxury is reserved for the editor.

- Don't repeat yourself. Say something once and let it go at that.

- Find out the best time to submit copy to your local editor and try to observe his deadline. Copy should be written neatly, preferably typed with double or triple spacing. Use one side of paper only.

- Don't write a title or headline for your story. Leave four inches at the top of the first page for the editor to write one in.

- Read your daily newspaper like a textbook. Notice what papers will print and what they will not.

- Remember that Webster defines *news* as "tidings, a report of recent events, a matter of interest to readers." Old news isn't news anymore.

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